

Management

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MONDAY MORNING MANAGER

Harvey Schachter's guide on how to handle everything from overflowing e-mail to meeting overload

INNOVATION

A look into the future: Trends to watch for in 2008



BORIS LYUBNER/ILLUSTRATION WORKS/CORBIS

In preparing for this year and beyond, there are eight big trends that you should be thinking about, according to Toronto-based innovation consultant and futurist Jim Carroll:

REVENGE OF THE MATH GEEKS

Analytics is hot. Those kids back in high school who were really good at math own the future. Whether it's balancing loads in energy systems or decoding our DNA, the 21st century is all about math. It's where the next billion-dollar industries will be born.

SMALL IS THE NEW R&D

It used to be that most innovation occurred from "big science" but today the global R&D process has changed. The Internet and growing peer networks allow ideas to spread more easily, and most new science discoveries percolate from the bottom up.

Some 40 per cent of the new medicines unveiled by "big pharma" in the past five years actually originated in small and mid-sized companies.

ATTITUDE AND AMUSEMENT

Take a look at the kids around you. They are your next employees.

As the baby boomers retire, you will need to figure out new ways to engage employees – to recruit, retain, manage, interest and amuse those young folk.

Remember: The gaming generation gets bored very quickly.

TIME DISAPPEARS

Expect the collapse of time. There will be no time to plan any more – just a need for action. Budgets will have to be continually adjusted to a world in which volatility is the norm.

"Today's ponderous, careful, tedious and meticulous organizational structure won't cut it tomorrow," he warns in a report on his website. "Agility

and flexibility are the key capabilities; the ability to react intelligently to accelerated change is critical."

RESISTING CHANGE RETIRES

As the boomers hand over the levers of power to Gen X, change will accelerate because the next leaders of our organizations embrace technology and change.

They will aggressively pursue and implement new ideas.

CAREERS END

More and more people will work on a contingent or contract basis.

"We are witnessing the end of modern organization and an ever more-rapid migration to the era of the itinerant work force," he predicts.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS BANKS

Knowledge and skills are also increasing in velocity, with greater specialization and ever more narrow niches of knowledge.

Some organizations will lock up scarce skills, and make them available in the form of a temporary, lease-able asset to other organizations that need a specific skill immediately.

INTERACTIVITY REDEFINES

The forthcoming era of pervasive connectivity will transform industries, as all the devices and things around us become plugged in.

Your skis and snowboards, for example, will have micro-processors offering real-time analysis of your motion and your smart-goggles will display integrated trail maps and conditions reports.

MAKE SOME CALLS

During his days as head of Goldman Sachs, U.S. Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson would call 60 CEOs in the first week of the year to wish them a happy New Year. When Tom Peters briefly worked in the White House in the mid-70s, he spent eight hours on New Year's Eve calling close to 100 people he worked with in agencies across Washington and embassies around the world. He urges you to consider a similar, sincere act of relationship enhancement in coming days.

» Source: Tom Peters!

A WEB OF TROUBLES

The biggest Web annoyances of 2007, that you must tackle in 2008, include: dubious privacy policies that allow the collecting of too much sensitive data; difficult online forms; overcommercializing of the Web with pop-ups, pop-unders, and noisy Flash commercials; and the lack of standards so people can go to a website and be told it doesn't accept their browser.

» Source: PC World

TECH IMPROVEMENTS

New and highly improved technology from 2007 you might consider this year: Zoho suite, an online office program that makes collaborating and editing documents from your browser easier; Microsoft Office 2007, which had a bumpy launch but offers advantages; the significantly updated Gmail; and the Ubuntu 7.10 free operating system, dubbed "Linux for humans."

» Source: Lifehacker

A SHIFT IN SPORTS

Sports superstars used to sign multimillion-dollar endorsement contracts but watch for that to change as more ask for equity in firms or business opportunities to work with them.

» Source: Knowledge @ Wharton

ADD COLOUR THIS YEAR

Before you get too deeply into this year's calendar – be it electronic or paper – think of how you can colour code it so similar activities stand out.

To colour in Outlook 2002/3 enter a label in the big screen where you enter the appointment or event, which allows you to apply a colour. With Outlook 2007, click on categorize.

» Source: Productivity Café